



STAND IN THE GAP FOR WIDOWS HOME MAINTENANCE MINISTRY GUIDE

*****A special thank you to architect Bruce Bockus for writing and donating Home Maintenance 101 to Stand in the Gap for Widows.***

"I didn't know how important this ministry was until I started volunteering. I was sent to a home to assist a widow. I looked at the work order and the only item to be done was "change a light bulb". I was a little surprised. I was prepared to help with a repair or at least something more substantial but I was there to serve so I went. When I arrived, I found a kind woman in a wheelchair. She showed me the light over her sink, and I changed it. She said she felt bad asking for her light bulb to be changed because she knew there were other widows that needed my services more, but all the other light bulbs had gone out and this was her only light that had worked. Needless to say, I changed ALL of her light bulbs that day." - Michiel Connor, Asbury UMC Men's Ministry Volunteer

Widow Saturday is a designated day to help widows with small home maintenance and repair chores that need to be done around the house. The home maintenance ministry is a volunteer ministry that puts God's message in action. It reflects the love of Christ by not only improving the physical home of widows, but also shows the widows they are loved.

Every home maintenance ministry will be different depending on the number of volunteers, funding and widows you are serving. SITGM has provided the home maintenance event ministry outline as a guide with successfully proven examples. You will need to customize the outline to fit your ministry. If you successfully implement other ideas into your ministry, please share them with Stand in the Gap so that we may make that information available to other ministries.

NOTE: We have included Home Maintenance 101 in our toolkit to assist a widow with her home maintenance needs. Home Maintenance 101 was written by an architect and former Stand in the Gap board member. It documents what should be checked inside and outside of a home once a year. We recommend a knowledgeable volunteer walk through the document with the widow.

Widow Saturday Best Practices

- * Typical home improvement repairs are the type that can be done in a few hours. Some repairs may need a follow up visit.
- * Jobs will not be undertaken which require the volunteer to be licensed or for which a building permit is required.
- * Volunteers will be placed into teams of two or more. **NO ONE WILL VOLUNTEER IN A WIDOW'S HOME ALONE.**
- * A volunteer may NOT accept money or gifts from the widow for their volunteer services.
- * The volunteer will have the widow sign the "Indemnity/Hold Harmless Agreement" prior to assisting the widow. It is important to protect the volunteer and the church from any liability that might arise from

the volunteer work.

* A volunteer will only complete jobs they know they are capable of completing successfully. Don't select projects that are beyond the capacity of the team members. Don't get in over your head.

Team Tasks

- Schedule the Widow Saturdays for the year. We suggest scheduling at least 4 per year (seasonally).
- Recruit volunteers, (see example flyer).
- Advertise Widow Saturday to the church and community (see example flyer) and provide the "Work Form Application" to all interested widows. The application will need to be adapted to your ministry's capabilities and funding limitations.
 - Acquire funding. Many ministries look to the men's ministries/groups within their church for volunteers and funding.
 - Contact volunteers to identify their home maintenance skills, their time commitment availability and any tools or supplies they would be willing to let the ministry utilize.
 - Collect "Work Form Applications" and send a job list to the volunteers. Ask volunteers to respond, informing the captain of which jobs they would feel the most comfortable performing.
 - Assign jobs and teams
 - Call widow and let her know who is coming and answer any of her questions. Give her any contact information (Team Captains and/or volunteers). Ask widow for directions to her home or any special instructions needed to find the home.
 - Supply team t-shirts and name tags (optional).
 - Provide volunteers a copy of the home maintenance application, directions to the home they are working and Home Maintenance 101. A Google map would be beneficial to the volunteer.
 - Have all volunteers sign the "Volunteer Covenant".

Widow Saturday

- Volunteers will meet at the church for donuts, prayer and fellowship prior to visiting their assigned widow's home. Team Captains will make sure volunteers have filled out the "Volunteer Covenant" form.
 - Team Captains will hand out t-shirts, name tags and job assignments.
 - Team Captains will make sure volunteers have a copy of their widow's "Work Form Application Form" and a "Volunteer Follow Up Form" with the widow's information already filled out.
 - Volunteers will go to widow's home. Many ministries choose to bring a flower to the widow during their visit.
 - Volunteers will go over what the widow would like completed during the visit.
 - Volunteers will pray with the widow before completing the job and prior to leaving.
 - Volunteers will go over what they were able to complete with the widow, answer any questions she might have and suggest any future work they feel might be necessary.
 - Volunteers will turn in a completed "Volunteer Follow Up Form" to the Team Captain.
 - Team Captains will follow up with the widow to make sure she was happy with the ministry's time in her home and see if she has any questions or concerns.

Stand in the Gap believes we are called to serve as protectors of widows (Psalms 68:5), we are to honor widows (1 Timothy 5:3), and we are to look after widows in their distress (James 1:27).

CONTACT:

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